Statement II

Yield / Productivity of Paddy, Wheat and Pulses during 1995 in India vis-a-vis some of the leading Western countries

Country	Paddy	(Kgs. / hectare) Wheat	Pulses
World	3689	2453	796
India	2879	2482	595
United States of America	6274	2410	1915
Canada	—	2260	1674
Italy	5551	3227	1614
France	4984	6512	4709
Switzerland	5000	5546	4000
Netherland	—	8854	4041
Germany	—	6887	2859
United Kingdom	—	7742	3162

Source: FAO Production Year Book, 1995.

Review of the Existing Rural Credit System

2883. SHRI B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have carried out an indepth review of the existing rural credit system;

(b) if so, the details of the findings; and

(c) how do Government propose to restructure the present credit system so as to double the flow of credit to agriculture and agroindustries, particularly to small and marginal farmers?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) Though no indepth review of the rural credit system has been made by the Government in the recent past, the Agricultural Credit Review Committee (ACRC) in the year 1989 and the Working Group on Agricultural Credit and Cooperation in August, 1996 for the formulation of the Ninth Five year Plan have made many recommendations. These include *inter-alia* immediate action to make Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACs) viable through enlarging their portfolio of profitable credit and non credit activities, activising members, increasing deposit mobilisation and building up linkages with consumer and marketing societies, strengthening of the base of cooperative by various structural and operational measures and the proposal to set up a National Cooperative Bank of India for increasing the flow of credit.

(c) The Common Minimum Programme of the present Government provides, *inter-alia* that the credit system will be re-structured so as to double the flow of credit to agriculture and agro-industries, particularly to small and marginal farmers. To achieve the objective enunciated in the Common Minimum Programme, a Special Action Plan consisting of formulation of a Plan scheme for Rehabilitation of cooperative credit structure has been launched. In order to augment credit flow to agriculture, it is proposed to increase the share capital of NABARD to Rs. 1000 crores from Rs. 500 crore and to set up State Agricultural Finance Development Corporations, to provide credit support needed for high-tech agricultural activities. As a part of comprehensive restructuring package, equity support to the extent of Rs. 274 crores has been provided to 102 Regional Rural Banks. Additional steps taken to improve credit flow to agriculture include Simplification of application forms, prescription of scales of finance for Crop loans as worked out by the technical committees constituted in each districts for various crops and their uniform adoption by banks, liberalisation of guidelines in regard to requirement of colleteral security by way of mortgage of land or third party guarantee, delegation of appropriate sanctioning powers to rural branch managers, disposal of loan application upto Rs. 25, 000/- within a fortnight and those over Rs. 25,000/- within 8-9 months, Introduction of Agricultural Cards by Public Sector Banks for farmers, Ensuring timely and adequate credit for sustaining agricultural

production and asking banks to finance high-tech activities like aquaculture, floriculture, tissue culture, bio-technology etc. Public Sector banks having short-fall in lending to the priority sector have been directed by RBI to contribute Rs. 2500 crores to the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF-II) on a pro-rata basis. The private banks which have failed to meet the priority sector lending target as on last Friday of March, 1996 have been directed to deposit 50% of the shortfall with NABARD or SIDBI at 8% per annum for a period of one year.

Setting-up of National Commission on Agriculture

2884. SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA:
DR. SHRIKANT RAM-CHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government feel that the time has come that a National Commission on Agriculture should be set-up;

(b) the recommendation of the First National Commission on Agriculture about formation of Commission from time to time;

(c) whether Government also feel that the Standing Committee are sufficient and that there is no need for any Commissions; and

(d) the policy of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) The Government presently do not feel the necessity of setting up a next National Commission on Agriculture. The first National Commission of Agriculture has not made any recommendation regarding formation of Commission from time to time.

(c) and (d) The Parliamentary Standing Committees on Agriculture Allied Sectors have been very helpful in reviewing of the on-going schemes and the formulation of new policies/schemes for the development of agriculture. Besides, the Government have been setting up Committees on specific issues and when required. The Agricultural Policy Resolution is under finalisation wherein the Government has tried to include all measures to enhance agricultural development.

National Agricultural Technology Programme

2885. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the stage and level of the National Agricultural Technology Programme at present;

(b) the amount being spent on it;

(c) the assistance received from the World Bank;

(d) the achievements of this programme; and

(e) the additional efforts made in this area?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) The Indian Council of Agriculture Research in close collaboration with the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Government of India, is formulating a National agricultural technology Project to strengthen the National Agricultural Research capability by bridging critical gaps in technology generation, assessment, refinement and transfer. The project is to be funded by the World Bank. The contemplated Project is at the pre-appraisal stage. Currently the World Bank Mission is in India for pre-appraisal.

(b) to (e) Does not arise, Sir.